

**U.S. Army  
Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization**

**JACADS  
PUBLIC INFORMATION AND INVOLVEMENT  
CLOSURE STRATEGY**

**February 1999**

NOTE: This working draft document is intended to outline a strategy for keeping the public informed and involved during the closure process of the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS). The approach is based on past comments received from the public and lessons captured from the Chemical Stockpile Disposal Project. The *Strategy* includes an implementation plan that is flexible and is designed to accept changes recommended by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region IX, various Department of Defense and Army organizations, oversight programs, and comments received from the public.

This *Strategy* additionally will be made available to the public at public availability sessions being held in Hawaii (February 25, 1999) and Guam (March 2, 1999). It will also be made available on the PMCD's web page.

Ms. Catherine Stalcup Herlinger is the point of contact for this *Strategy*. Please provide any written comments on this *Strategy* to: Ms. Catherine Stalcup Herlinger, U.S. Army Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization, ATTN: SFAE-CD-P, Bldg. E4585, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-4005. Ms. Herlinger's E-mail is [cherling@cdra.apgea.army.mil](mailto:cherling@cdra.apgea.army.mil) and FAX number is (410) 436-5122.

For more information on JACADS, visit the PMCD's web page at <http://www-pmcd.apgea.army.mil>, or call (800) 488-0648.

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## JACADS Public Information and Involvement Closure Strategy

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## JACADS Public Information and Involvement Closure Strategy

### INTRODUCTION

The world's first full-scale chemical agent disposal facility, the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS), will be completing disposal operations and commencing closure proceedings in 2000. With imminent closure of the facility in sight, the Army's Chemical Stockpile Disposal Project is coming one step closer to its ultimate goal: disposal of the entire U.S. chemical weapons stockpile and removal of the risk of stockpile storage from our communities.

This JACADS Public Information and Involvement Closure Strategy has been developed by the Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization (PMCD) Public Outreach and Information Office (POIO) to provide a framework for conducting public information and involvement activities surrounding plans for the closure of JACADS. Contained within the framework are detailed mini-plans for conducting information and involvement campaigns for the remaining milestones and other important closure activities. The foundation for this framework is the relationship among several key program partners and stakeholders: the Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization (PMCD), the United States Army Pacific Command (USARPAC), the United States Army Chemical Activity – Pacific (USACAP), the Army Defense Special Weapons Agency (DSWA), the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region IX (San Francisco). Successfully closing JACADS must be a shared venture.

POIO has several objectives in connection with the *JACADS Public Information and Involvement Closure Strategy*:

1. **Identify JACADS' stakeholders and promote partnerships.**

With operations underway at JACADS beginning in 1990 and with facility construction getting underway at the continental United States (CONUS) locations, POIO's focus shifted from the Pacific to the mainland. That focus is now shifting back. POIO is

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securing its contact with stakeholders previously interested in JACADS activities and establishing new relationships among the general public.

2. **Inform and involve JACADS' stakeholders and program partners.**

JACADS has the widest audience of all the stockpile sites: the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, federal and state legislators, local, national and international media and the general public. With so many variables surrounding JACADS closure proceedings, the potential for misunderstanding and opposition is relatively great despite the good news that the facility is finishing its mission and closing. Ensuring that JACADS' stakeholders and program partners are abreast of and involved in the activities being conducted on the island will enable them to give positive input with regard to both defining closure activities at JACADS and supporting the Army's mission.

3. **Provide timely national and local media information and notification.**

The news of the imminent closure of the Chemical Stockpile Disposal Project's first chemical weapons disposal facility has been anticipated by the program's stakeholders, environmental activists, and internal program partners alike. POIO is dedicated to sharing the story surrounding JACADS' closure with the media as it unfolds as one means of reporting the program's progress to all interested parties in a timely manner.

4. **Provide a closure model for the eight continental U.S. stockpile sites.**

Closing JACADS is a groundbreaking endeavor for the Chemical Stockpile Disposal Project from both a technical and a public outreach perspective. The lessons learned in achieving this goal will be invaluable when the time comes to close the CONUS disposal facilities.

## HISTORY

The Army constructed the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS) in 1985 following a directive from Congress to destroy the United States' chemical weapons stockpile. The National Research Council agreed with the Army that it had found a safe and effective

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means, through the “baseline” incineration technology, to dispose of every type of weapon, energetics, bulk ton containers, and chemical agents in the stockpile.

**Prototype facility.** JACADS is the world’s first full-scale facility designed specifically for the disposal of chemical weapons. JACADS has eliminated its stockpile of nerve agent rockets, nerve agent bombs, blister and nerve agent ton containers, nerve agent warheads, and blister agent projectiles (105-mm). In addition to JACADS, the Army currently operates another chemical weapons disposal facility, the Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF), in Tooele, Utah. JACADS played a vital role in the design and operation of TOCDF by providing operational experience the Army could apply to enhance operations at TOCDF. The Lessons Learned Program captures both design and operational lessons learned, creating safer and more efficient facilities to dispose of our chemical weapons. The Army will continue to use lessons learned at JACADS and TOCDF as it constructs baseline incineration facilities at Anniston, Alabama; Umatilla, Oregon; and Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

**Successful Operations.** The Army’s Program Manager for Chemical Demilitarization is charged by Congress to destroy the U.S. stockpile of unitary chemical weapons while ensuring maximum protection to the environment, general public, and personnel involved in the destruction effort. This, then, is the standard against which the Army measures the success of its disposal efforts. Incineration is a proven technology that is effective and safe for our workers, the public, and the environment. As the Army continues to dispose of these chemical weapons, it works closely with federal, state, and local officials to ensure operations are safe for workers, the people of the Pacific, and its precious environment, as evidenced by the following facts:

- Independent scientific investigations conducted on the hundreds of unique sea bird species and the coral reef surrounding Johnston Atoll since 1990 have not been able to detect any adverse effects to the natural environment resulting from chemical agent disposal operations.
- JACADS has an outstanding industrial safety record due to the several layers of protection built in to the facility, its operations, and to the safety culture of the work force. Although the work force is highly trained to respond in the event of an emergency,

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it has never had to put its training into action. JACADS' huge success in protecting the health of its work force is captured in a unique Army initiative called "Program Lessons Learned" for adoption at other chemical agent disposal facilities including TOCDF, the first facility constructed in the continental U.S.

**Coexistence with unique natural environment.** Johnston Atoll is a designated national wildlife refuge that is continuously monitored by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The Army works together with the service to ensure the protection of Johnston Atoll's unique wildlife and natural environment as it conducts its mission to dispose of the chemical weapons stockpile located there. Many activities take place at JACADS that help the Army and other oversight agencies determine the impacts that disposal operations may have on Johnston Atoll's ecosystem. For example, JACADS hosts an active environmental research program for both sea birds and aquatic life. Biologists from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reside permanently on the island to study the interaction between humans and the environment, and independent biologists from Seabird Research, Inc., the Ornithological Council and Boston University Marine Biological Laboratory also monitor the wildlife on and around Johnston Atoll. This oversight will continue until operations at JACADS are complete and the facility has been dismantled.

**Chemical Stockpile Disposal Project milestone.** Currently, the Army expects to complete disposal operations at JACADS in the year 2000. When disposal operations are completed, the Army will begin to dismantle JACADS in accordance with public law. This is an exciting prospect for the Army. Its record shows the public that it can move towards its objectives safely and effectively, bearing out its claims that:

- Incineration is proven to dispose safely of a diverse chemical weapons stockpile and the U.S. should move ahead with this technology;
- Disposal operations can be conducted with environmental sensitivity; and
- The facilities will then be decontaminated and dismantled.

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### APPROACH

POIO will meet its objectives through research and through conducting several specific public information and involvement campaigns.

In order to involve the public throughout the closure of the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS), stakeholders must first be identified. The stakeholders addressed in this closure strategy are the general public, advocacy groups, local, state and federal legislators, and Army and federal agencies responsible for Johnston Atoll.

The Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System began operations in June of 1990. Since that time, the disposal of chemical munitions on Johnston Island has faced some contention. Environmental groups were concerned that disposal operations would harm the island's natural wildlife refuge and surrounding environment. Anti-incineration groups were against the 'burning' of chemical weapons and charged that the Army was guilty of environmental racism. Neighboring communities such as Hawaii and the Pacific area were in fear of chemical agents leaking into the Pacific Ocean and much of their food supply. These stakeholders have been vocal in their opinion of incineration on Johnston Island and have been a primary focus of the Army and its key program partners in past public outreach efforts. These stakeholders will be a continued focus for POIO in its upcoming public outreach activities for closure.

POIO's first step will entail encouraging the known stakeholders to identify any unknown stakeholders. Through research and detailed campaign plans, POIO will also identify and focus its outreach efforts on stakeholders outside of Hawaii and the Pacific area. Concentration on the national television, print and radio media; federal, state, and local government representatives; environmental organizations; the stockpile facility workforce; and CONUS stockpile communities will enable the JACADS closure message to reach a comprehensive audience.

Stakeholders will be informed and involved in many different areas. Mini-plans for conducting public information and involvement campaigns will be developed and. Each mini-plan can involve a myriad of media tools and public information products such as press releases, media

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and information kits, video b-rolls, newsletters, fact sheets, and PMCD's web site. These tools and products can be presented via mailouts, public meetings and conferences, community interviews, public tours, and availability sessions. The mini-plans will be tailored to each specific milestone as well as for each distinct stakeholder group. The following sections provide the type of milestones and campaigns anticipated throughout closure.

### *Closure Milestones*

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JACADS will reach several technical milestones before it destroys its last chemical munition and begins clean up of Johnston Island. Milestones for the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System constitute an important point in progress towards the eventual closure of JACADS and clean up of the island. There are several major JACADS milestones: completion of the nerve agent GB, blister agent HD, and nerve agent VX campaigns; the last munition processed at JACADS; closure of JACADS, which include the removal of the facility's equipment; and other campaigns to clean up Johnston Island.

### *Waste Transport Information Campaigns*

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Part of JACADS closure will involve the shipping of waste off of Johnston Island and transporting it to approved hazardous waste disposal facilities in the continental United States. These facilities are permitted and better equipped to safely dispose of identified waste. POIO will develop information campaigns geared towards those communities and state, local and federal government officials where wastes will travel through and eventually be disposed of. Waste transportation information campaigns will help to better inform these stakeholders about the shipping of wastes through their communities and alleviate any unfounded fears these communities may have.

One of PMCD's first off-island waste transport missions involved the Army's plans to ship waste (decontamination solution) from Johnston Island to an incinerator in Sauget, Illinois for disposal in May of 1998. On April 21, 1998, PMCD held a public meeting to explain how the process



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would work. Because of permitting issues, the decontamination solution -- a mixture of 98 percent water, one- percent salts and one- percent organic materials -- could not be destroyed at JACADS. The Sauget, Illinois incinerator was selected after the Army put an announcement out through the competitive bidding process seeking a company that could destroy the decontamination solution. However, due to concerns expressed by the public, in addition to objections from Representative Jerry Costello, D-Belleville, Illinois, and negative media attention, which began after the publicity over the Navy's napalm shipment, the Army had to abandon plans to ship its waste from Johnston Island to the Chemical Waste Management incineration facility in Sauget.

Although much is presently unknown of what is planned to be shipped off-island, POIO will partner with the JACADS technical team and EPA representatives to stay abreast of future plans to ship wastes off-island in order to better inform these communities about the Army's waste transportation plans.

### ***Solomon Island Rounds***

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In 1990, then-Secretary of Defense Cheney assured the South Pacific Forum that the U.S. would safely dispose of all its WWII munitions found in the Pacific region. In May 1991, 109 blister agent-filled projectiles (155mm) recovered from the Solomon Islands were carefully packed into protective steel cylinders and barged to Johnston Island where they were placed in bunkers for safe storage. In 1992, Assistant Secretary of the Army Susan Livingston told Congress that the rounds would be disposed of at the JACADS toward the end of the disposal campaign.

The Army traditionally has considered the Solomon Island rounds to be part of the chemical weapons stockpile since they were brought to Johnston Island for storage, even though the rounds were not included in the original stockpile inventory. This is because the Program Manager for Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel, with its five categories of chemical warfare materiel including recovered chemical warfare materiel, was not established until 1993.

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Disposing of these rounds would demonstrate to the Pacific area peoples, to the South Pacific Forum, and the eight chemical weapons stockpile sites that the Army is committed to fulfilling its obligation. There are essentially two options on disposing of these rounds: they can be destroyed at JACADS or transported to an U.S. location for destruction. The PMCD's preferred alternative would be to dispose of the Solomon Island rounds at JACADS. The reasons for this preference are threefold. First, it would be following through with the statement Ms. Livingston made to Congress in 1992 that they would be destroyed there. Second, destruction on-site would possibly avoid last year's public opposition faced by PMCD over transporting decontamination solution off-site. Lastly, the Pacific area public and governments agreed that the Solomon Island rounds would be moved to Johnston Island because they felt it was a community problem and they viewed themselves as ONE community. Destroying the rounds at JACADS would be responsive to "taking care of a community problem" rather than sending them elsewhere for destruction.

The problem to destroying the rounds at JACADS is that it adds unplanned time to the proposed overall disposal schedule, increases cost, and creates a relatively dangerous work environment for facility employees due to the deteriorated condition of the projectiles.

Before the Army makes a final decision on the disposition of these rounds, the public, who include stakeholders and other interested groups, will need to be kept informed and involved. Public input will be sought before any final decisions are made or actions are taken. The public availability sessions in Hawaii (February 25) and Guam (March 2) as well as meetings with government agency officials in Hawaii, Guam, Palau, and Pohnpei, from February 24 – March 10 will allow PMCD opportunities to discuss this issue further and obtain public input.

### ***Closure Permit Issues/Change Management***

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The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region IX issues and renews the proper Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) permits needed to safely dispose of chemical munitions

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at JACADS. Historically, EPA has involved stakeholders in this permitting process. Before EPA grants any environmental permits, it allows a comment period for stakeholders to voice their opinions and concerns regarding disposal facilities such as JACADS. JACADS will be the first chemical demilitarization facility to go through the closure process. With this in mind, technical issues may arise during closure that neither EPA nor the Army has predetermined, therefore revisions to the approved permit may be in order. POIO will assist EPA in involving and informing stakeholders of any revisions or changes to JACADS RCRA permit throughout closure.

PMCD wants to involve JACADS stakeholders in decisions being made about the closure of JACADS and clean up of Johnston Island, as well as the methods stakeholders want to be informed about JACADS and closure. With guidance from POIO, the goal to involve the public will be accomplished.

### *JACADS Tours*

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PMCD is committed to continuing to sponsor and host a series of tours of the JACADS facility. These tours are offered to stakeholders from various groups such as the communities in the Pacific area; environmental advocacy groups; and citizens from PMCD's stockpile communities where chemical demilitarization facilities are being constructed and modeled after JACADS. The tours give stakeholders a first-hand look at the safety of operations at JACADS; answer any questions stakeholders may have about the chemical demilitarization process; and ensure stakeholders of the safety and efficiency of JACADS and of the chemical demilitarization facilities being built in their communities. Giving stakeholders an opportunity to tour Johnston Atoll also reassures them that the Army is dedicated to protecting the environment surrounding its chemical demilitarization facilities, as demonstrated by the coexistence of the Atoll's national wildlife refuge and JACADS.

*Pacific Area Information Campaign*

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Peoples from the Pacific area are representative of JACADS stakeholders who are concerned with the affect that incineration could have on the nearby environment. The Pacific area includes, but is not limited to, the countries of Guam, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau. With the Pacific area encompassing a myriad of languages, governments, customs, cultures, and beliefs, a diverse information strategy must be developed. The Pacific area campaign will involve several months of touring some of these Pacific area countries to inform these stakeholders about the closure activities at JACADS. Each tour will be tailored to suit the needs of each particular country and stakeholder group. The approach for the Pacific area information campaign will include the distribution of questionnaires to Pacific area stakeholders; South Pacific Forum members; visitors who have previously toured Johnston Island; and stakeholders from existing mailing lists. These questionnaires will educate POIO on who JACADS unknown stakeholders are, what are the current concerns of stakeholders, and how they wish to be informed of and involved in the JACADS closure process.

With support from technical and environmental scientists and facility workforce members, POIO will then conduct meetings and workshops with Pacific area stakeholders to discuss all aspects of closure to provide information regarding their concerns and issues about disposing of the chemical stockpile on Johnston Island and the eventual closure of the facility. POIO will then extend an invitation to representatives from the Pacific area to visit JACADS during its operations.

As a follow-up to these visits, POIO will continue to host meetings with Pacific area stakeholders to discuss and update them on the closure process. Once the JACADS facility has been closed and clean up is complete, the Army will bring Pacific area stakeholders back to the island to see the outcome.

## ***Employee In-reach Program***

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JACADS would not have achieved the level of success that it has without the dedication and hard work from the workers of the JACADS facility. Raytheon Engineers and Constructors, subcontractors tasked with operating the JACADS facility, as well as subcontractors from Westinghouse and EG&G conducting operations at PMCD's CONUS sites, are valuable stakeholders in the JACADS closure strategy. Employee in-reach programs will be enhanced to inform facility workers of POIO's various media strategies; exchange ideas with workers for innovative strategies to involve the public; and develop and maintain solid working relationships with the workers. Chemical stockpile facility workers will also be involved in much of POIO's outreach initiatives by speaking with communities about the day-to-day to operations of the facility; the safety training received to operate the facility; and the safety culture that is maintained at JACADS. This partnership between POIO and the JACADS employees will send out a unified message to stakeholders.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation of the *JACADS Public Information and Involvement Closure Strategy* encompasses consistently informing and involving JACADS' stakeholders in the facility's remaining milestones and other activities described briefly in the previous section. To this end, tailored plans for each approach will be developed by POIO with input from program partners. Each of these plans will include the following elements as appropriate.

- Stakeholder Group/Audience
- Key Messages
- Specific Activities
- Communication Medium
- Product Development (e.g., Information Kits, Web Support)
- Schedule/Timeline

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- Follow-Up/Feedback
- News Coverage
- Lessons Learned
- Qs&As
- Roles & Responsibilities
- Environmental Justice
- Risk Communications Training

Recommended enclosures to be included in the *JACADS Public Information and Involvement Closure Strategy* for background informational purposes will be organized as:

Appendix A - Q&A Section .....	A-1
Appendix B - Technical Milestone Timeline .....	B-1
Appendix C - Information Campaign Timeline Charts .....	C-1
Appendix D - Pacific Area Contacts.....	D-1
Appendix E - Federal Contact List .....	E-1
Appendix F - State and Local Government Contact List.....	F-1
Appendix G - Community Contact List.....	G-1
Appendix H - Media Contact List .....	H-1
Appendix I - Facility Workforce List .....	I-1
Appendix J - News Coverage .....	J-1

### COMMUNITY COMMENT FORM

One of the methods used by PMCD POIO to obtain information about how the public wanted to be kept informed and involved was through questionnaires. These questionnaires are specific enough to identify preferred communication methods, but general enough to allow community members to express what topics interested them. A comment form is provided in this *Strategy* in the event that members of the public who to use it to provide input to PMCD.

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### COMMUNITY COMMENT FORM

In order to enhance the Army's public outreach efforts for the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS), your feedback is imperative. Your responses will assist us in knowing how you want to be kept **informed** about and **involved** in our JACADS activities. Please fill out the following response form and fax it to (410) 436-5122 or E-mail your comments to cherling@cdra.apgea.army.mil.

1. I would like to be added to the Army's mailing list to receive information about JACADS. (Please Print)

NAME

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ADDRESS

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2. I **usually** receive information about this topic from: (Please check off the one that applies)

\_\_\_\_\_ The Army

\_\_\_\_\_ The EPA Region IX (San Francisco)

\_\_\_\_\_ Attending public meetings

\_\_\_\_\_ The Newspaper(s) (please name them) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The Television (please name the stations/channels) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The Radio (please name the stations/call letters) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ The South Pacific Forum

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (please identify other ways you receive information) \_\_\_\_\_

3. I **prefer** to receive information and provide feedback on this topic from... (please rank them from 1 to 6, 1 being the method you would most prefer be used to keep you informed and 6 being the method you would least prefer be used):

\_\_\_\_\_ The Army

\_\_\_\_\_ The EPA Region IX (San Francisco)

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\_\_\_\_\_Attending public meetings

\_\_\_\_\_The Newspaper(s)

\_\_\_\_\_The Television

\_\_\_\_\_The Radio

\_\_\_\_\_The South Pacific Forum

\_\_\_\_\_Tours to JACADS

\_\_\_\_\_Other (please  
identify)\_\_\_\_\_

4. I would like to be **informed** about the following topics relative to JACADS:

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5. I would like to be **involved** in JACADS activities (closure issues, permitting issues, etc.) in the following manner:

\_\_\_\_\_Provide comments during public comment periods

\_\_\_\_\_Provide feedback at public meetings

\_\_\_\_\_Provide feedback at the South Pacific Forum

\_\_\_\_\_Provide feedback during Army briefings to me

\_\_\_\_\_Other (please identify)\_\_\_\_\_

6. Other suggestions or comments\_\_\_\_\_

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